

Impact of front office staff competency on guest satisfaction

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Abstract: For the satisfaction of hotel guests, the front desk is of the utmost importance. The workers working at the front desk have the most interaction with guests over the entirety of the guest life cycle. It is more probable that guests will return to the hotel or write a favourable review if the front desk operations crew creates a good impression on them. In other words, the success of the hotel is directly influenced by the front desk and its operations. The results of a number of polls indicate that the innovative approaches, service quality, politeness, competency, and responsiveness (CCR) of the staff members have a positive influence on the levels of customer satisfaction in the hotel. Employees working at the front desk are the face of the hotel and one of its most important divisions; thus, the performance of these employees is essential to the initial impressions that guests get of the establishment. There are a number of research findings that indicate that competence has a significant impact on a negative first impression, friendliness and service attitude have a significant impact on a positive first impression, and both positive and negative first impressions have a significant impact on the level of customer satisfaction with the check-in experience. It is hoped that the findings of this research would be of assistance in the development of future management training for workers who are new to the hotel industry.

Keywords: Guest, Happiness, Satisfaction, Innovative, Service quality, Attitude.

INTRODUCTION

Due to the fact that the front office is the initial point of contact between a guest and a hospitality facility, the team responsible for the front office is an essential factor in determining the overall experience that a guest has. The level of expertise possessed by front-desk employees, which includes their knowledge, communication skills, problem-solving ability, professionalism, and attitude, is a crucial factor in determining the level of pleasure experienced by guests. In the hotel business, where service quality is a major differentiator, the capacity of front office professionals to provide service that is quick, polite, and personalised has a direct effect on how clients' perceptions of the entire organization are formed.

When a guest interacts with the front office, whether it be for the purpose of making a reservation, checking in, or making a question, the satisfaction of the guest begins. It is the responsibility of competent staff members to make a favourable first impression by receiving customers with a friendly greeting, conducting processes in an expedient manner, and

exhibiting a comprehensive awareness of hotel services and rules. Communication that is both clear and concise is essential to this connection. When employees are able to communicate effectively, listen carefully, and reply correctly, they contribute to the development of trust and the reduction of misconceptions. It is of utmost significance to keep this in mind in multicultural settings, where visitors may come from a variety of cultural and language backgrounds.

The capacity to solve problems is yet another essential component of expertise in front office work. Inconsistencies in bookings, preferences about the hotel, and delays in service are common problems that guests frequently face. Guests have a greater sense of worth and care when they are provided with competent staff members who are able to rapidly analyse circumstances and give suitable solutions. The capacity of these individuals to maintain composure in the face of intense pressure and to respond to concerns with empathy and professionalism has the potential to turn a potentially terrible encounter into a good one. Not only does this response ease urgent issues, but it also enhances the loyalty of potential guests and motivates them to return for more trips.

Additionally, technical expertise is a crucial component in contemporary hospitality situations. The employees working in the front office are required to have a strong understanding of how to use Property Management Systems (PMS), reservation software, and other digital technologies. A reduction in waiting time and an improvement in the overall visitor experience may be achieved through the efficient management of check-ins, check-outs, and invoicing procedures. On the other side, mistakes in these procedures might result in unhappiness and a loss of faith in the organization. As a result, it is essential to provide employees with ongoing training and new skills in order to ensure that they are up to speed with the latest technical breakthroughs and industry standards.

An additional factor that contributes to the delight of guests is professionalism and attitude. Employees that are competent in the front office demonstrate civility, patience, and a mindset that is focused on providing service. The way they carry themselves and the way they move their bodies conveys respect and attentiveness, which has a huge impact on how guests perceive them. It is possible for a good attitude to compensate for minor service deficiencies, but a bad attitude can impair even the delivery of high-quality service.

In addition, front-desk employees frequently take on the role of ambassadors for the business, giving information about area services, transportation, and attractions. Because of their expertise and eagerness to provide assistance to customers, the whole travel experience is improved, which results in a stay that is more fun and memorable. A personalised service, such as remembering the preferences of the visitor or providing recommendations that are customised to their needs, provides a special touch that not only increases pleasure but also builds an emotional connection.

In the past, guests have usually considered the front office to be the place at which they check in and check out of the establishment. Secondly, it is considered to be a focus for problem-solving, and thirdly, it is seen as a source of a limitless amount of knowledge. During my time as a front-line manager, I encountered a number of instances that resulted in a distinct "gap" between the expectations of management about the function of front office staff and the way in which front office employees viewed these expectations in relation to their obligations for guest service.

OBJECTIVE

1. To assess how well front desk staff members interact with guests.
2. To evaluate hotel guests' satisfaction with front desk procedures

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

In the city of New Delhi, copies of the summary were acquired from a number of different hotels. Given that the front desk is the area where the whole registration process takes place and is a spot that all guests should visit, we decided that the best approach to gather data was through a survey that was distributed to guests by the personnel working at the front desk. Based on our projections, we estimated that between 220 and 300 individuals would finish the overview. In addition to that, there was no predetermined time frame for the collection of the study.

Sample-magnitude

A total of 220 individuals from the hotels in Himachal Pradesh were selected to participate in the survey.

Examining

Table 1 presents the results of an exhaustive study that exposes the segment characteristics of the participants. These characteristics include elements relating to gender, age, and method of transportation. Two hundred and twenty of the 240 surveys that were finished were deemed to be legitimate. There were a total of twenty respondents that were not included in the data screening process because they neglected to finish the questionnaire or did not complete it at all.

Table 1: Profile of Respondent

Characteristics		N	Percentage
Gender	Female	105	47.73%
	Male	115	52.27%
	Total	220	100%
Age	17-24	62	28.18%
	25-34	120	54.54%
	35-44	16	7.27%
	45-54	8	3.64%
	55-64	10	4.55%
	More than 65	4	1.82%
	Total	220	100%
	Travel Type	Business	66

	Leisure	154	70%
	Total	220	100%

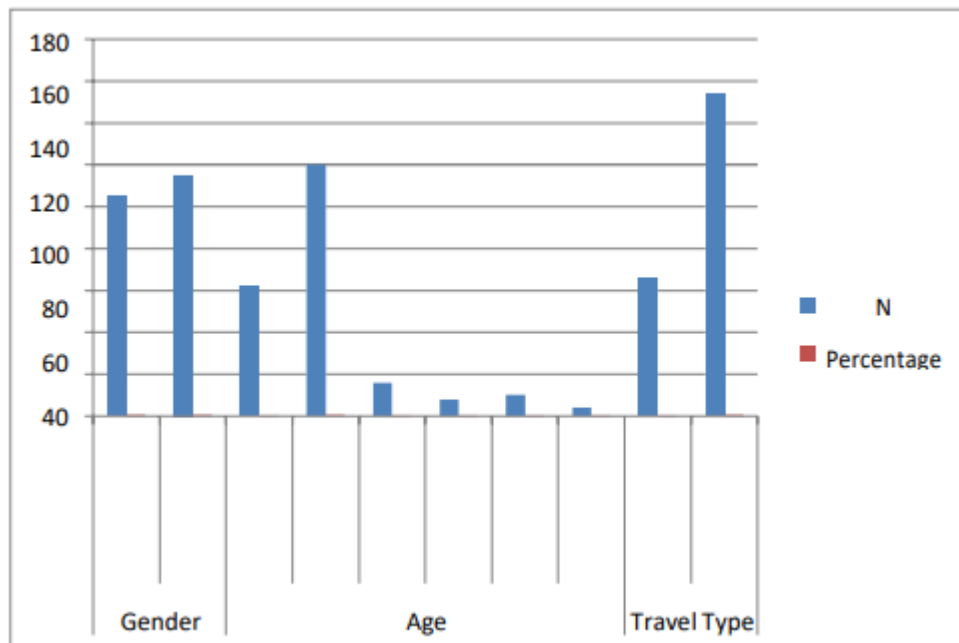


Table :2 regression analysis of the guest impression

Dependent Variable: Positive Impression				
IndependentVariable	B	β	t-value	Sig.
(Constant)	1.480		5.986	.000
Competence	.166	.122	3.458	.001
Knowledge	.245	.236	6.693	.000
Personalizedservice (Friendliness& Service Attitude)	.325	.254	3.660	.000

The report that is shown below may be found in Table 3. This inquiry regressed the poor elements to free variables in order to better understand them. The decrease in unfavourable impressions that occurred as a result of the impacts of the organization's attitude, competence, knowledge, and friendliness is graphically presented in Table 2. The overall model's F value is 19.440, and the degree opportunity is 3. The centrality level is 0.000b (which is less than 0.05). This model will continue to be massive for the foreseeable future as well as right now. After then, the impacts of each variable were investigated in further depth within the context of this evaluation. This is due to the fact that talent is less significant than.05 (.000), ability has a significant influence on the picture that is not favourable. There is a higher level of significance than 0.05 (.832) for the information, which indicates that the negative impact of the information is not substantially reduced. The degree of association between friendliness and service attitude is not very strong because their centrality level is more than.05, which indicates that they have a certain influence on the contentment of visitors.

Table 3: Regression Results of guest satisfaction

Dependent Variable: Negative Impression				
Independent Variable	B	β	t-value	Sig.
(Constant)	1.109		2.693	.008
Competence	.204	.182	2.934	.004
Knowledge	.314	.245	4.092	.000
Personalized service (Friendliness& Service Attitude)	.200	.178	2.975	.000

The third report is available for viewing in Table 4. In light of the findings of this investigation, the dependent factors have evolved into independent factors. When it comes to shop closure, the influence of both positive and negative perceptions on the level of pleasure experienced by guests is presented in Table 4. The criticality level is 0.000b, the degree opportunity is 2,

and the F value for the total model is 23.305. This model is large as a consequence of this. The amplitude of the unfavourable impression is smaller than.05 (.001), which has a major influence on the degree to which guests are content with the experience they had during registration.

Table 4: Comparative study on Guest Satisfaction in hotel

Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction				
Independent Variable	B	B	t-value	Sig.
(Constant)	2.134		5.113	.000
Positive Impression	.304	.256	3.741	.000
Negative Impression	.309	.259	4.485	.000

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The research is restricted to a few hotels in Chh. Sambhajinagar, and it is possible that the results may not accurately represent all hotel categories.
2. It's possible that convenience sampling doesn't exactly reflect the opinions of all of the visitors.
3. Due to time restrictions, the sample size was limited to one hundred individuals who responded.
4. It is possible that personal expectations will have an effect on the responses of guests.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Training Programs That Are Conducted Regularly Hotels should provide its employees with frequent training in areas such as communication skills, service etiquette, and critical thinking abilities.
2. Utilising technology, such as digital check-in systems and automatic invoicing, may cut down on the amount of time guests have to wait and improve their overall experience.

3. Empowering Employees: The front office workers should be given the authority to investigate and resolve minor issues without first obtaining clearance from management.
4. The Guest Feedback System: The collection of immediate feedback gathered at the time of checkout can assist in the rapid identification of service shortcomings.
5. Incentives and Motivation: In order to inspire front office personnel to provide excellent service, reward mechanisms should be implemented inside the organization.
6. The Number of Employees: Having an adequate number of employees during peak hours will prevent service delays and ensure that guests are satisfied.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, front-desk personnel are responsible for ensuring that their clients are pleased and satisfied. When it comes to the hotel's ability to maintain its performance as a key driver of guest satisfaction, the front desk staff is absolutely essential. They ensure that guests are always connected to the hotel and offer the most varied exposure to the hotel's operations. The personnel working at the front desk, on the other hand, will be the ones to provide the image of the hotel to customers. They will have a strong ability to anticipate the requirements of visitors and go above and beyond their expectations. When it comes to having satisfied customers and recurring business, the most important things are having standardised products, having personnel that is both motivated and qualified, and having quality management. According to the conclusions of the survey, the majority of visitors feel themselves content with the overall services provided by the Front Office department.

It would appear that the front office department is one of the areas that is a significant contributor to the satisfaction of guests. Strong motivational methods include employee incentive tactics such as the Star-o-meter, which consists of receiving star points for providing high-quality services; the Employee of the Month Award; and publishing such information on bulletin boards for everyone to see. The hotel's training procedures and recruiting practices are both efficient, which is another point that should be brought to your attention. The Front Office practices of sending the bill the night before or slipping it in with the newspaper early in the morning for the guest to check, offering goody bags and gifts while the guest is leaving the hotel, capturing such moments in photographs and mailing them to the guest, answering

questions and effectively handling complaints have all contributed to the level of satisfaction that the guest has with the hotel.

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